a mournful diminution in our resources of sea transport.

Nothing was done during the lifetime of the First Coalition Government to establish a thorough and efficient reorganisation and control of our shipping. This problem was therefore left amongst other embarrassing inheritances, for the new Government to grapple with. I knew it was a whole-time job for a man of practical experience and tried capacity. So pressing did I consider the shipping situation that, as soon as I was invited by the King to form a Government, without even waiting until the principal offices were filled, I invited Sir Joseph Maclay, a well-known Glasgow shipowner of high repute, to take the office of Shipping Controller—a selection which was strongly supported by Mr. Bonar Law. I had never met him, but as Mr. Bonar Law knew him well and had the highest opinion of his capacity and character, I rang Maclay up at his Glasgow office on my first day as Prime Minister. The line was so bad that I could not hear a word he said, so I invited him to come up and see me in London. He travelled up that night and met me the following morning at the War Office—(I had not yet left this office for Downing Street)—and I asked him if he would accept the post of Shipping Controller.

With characteristic modesty Sir Joseph Maclay declined, telling me that in his opinion a

Problem left Government

Sir Joseph Maclay accepts the new Ministry

man of wider experience and influence should be secured for the position. It required the joint persuasion of Mr. Bonar Law and myself to wring from him a reluctant consent. We had every reason to be proud of the pressure we exerted on the occasion, for no